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20 November 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: SF []

SUBJECT: Exiles in Stockholm

REFERENCE: SP Memo to ME-II on same subject dated 3 November 1950

1. Respecting your memorandum on subject we have studied our files respecting Mikhelson and Kalmin (presumably Arno Kalnins). Both men are well-known trade unionists and strong Social Democrats. They have both been officially connected with the Social Democratic government in Sweden. The two men also have another trait in common, i.e. they have been the subject of bitter accusations, including charges that they are Communists. This has probably resulted in part because of their favored position vis-a-vis the Swedish government and also because of their roles as leaders of the social democratic and trade union elements in their respective nationality emigre communities. Both men are quite doctrinaire in their political positions, but Kalnins is much more inflexible and dogmatic. Both are considered reliable.

2. Johannes Mikhelson was formerly the chairman of the Estonian Trade Union in the days of the Estonian Republic. He has been in Sweden since 1944 as an active trade unionist—he has organized most of the Estonian emigres into his unions—and as a contact man for the Foreigner's Section of the Swedish Government Labor Market Commission. He has been one of the most active leaders of the Estonian emigre organizations, participating as the leader of the Social Democrats in all significant composite Estonian emigre political organizations. He is on the board and standing committee of the Estonian National Adet (ENR), the generally recognized representative Estonian emigre organization. He is Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission of ENR. Next to August Rei, Mikhelson is probably the most important Estonian emigre. Mikhelson has favorably impressed [] and [] source in Paris with his positive approach. Mikhelson has also been listed as a leader of the Confederation of Free Trade Unionists in Exile which has its headquarters in France. In summary, Mikhelson has important contacts within the Estonian Emigre community and Western Europe trade union circles in general.

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3. Bruno Kalnins, son of Paul Kalnins, former speaker of the Latvian Parliament, is chairman of the Swedish branch of the Central Council of Latvia (LCP) and the leader of the Latvian Social Democratic Party-in-exile. He is believed to work for the Swedish aliens commission and the Swedish Foreign Office on matters concerning Baltic refugees. He is a member of the Bureau of Socialists in Exile. As was the case with Mikkelson, Kalnins has been accused of Communist sympathies or collaboration but the charges have generally been discredited and Kalnins is considered reliable.

4. Thus, it is apparent that [] has not been supporting any "snow merchants" or "dead beats"—both men have been very active in their emigre circles, and they have wide contacts and support within these circles and the trade union movement in general. There is nothing in our files that would indicate that these men have significant sources that reach behind the iron curtain. However, despite this fact the money expended by [] is not necessarily foolishly spent since the position of these men makes any intelligence produced by them significant from an interpretative standpoint, even if that intelligence is neither particularly current or significant.

5. Respecting the possibility of our providing additional funds to be added to FJIROLI's subsidization, however, we can make no recommendation without more information. The sketchy information from [] is entirely inadequate for any type of evaluation. If we are going to support any particular enterprise, we have the right, and obligation, to know the purposes of, and results from, that particular operation. For example, we would want to know: What and where are the sources of these men? How do they keep these contacts alive? Can [] furnish us some of the intelligence produced by the source's of Mikkelson and Kalnins? What is the specific need for the increased subsidization? In other words we may be interested but we would like a clearer picture of what has been and can be produced by these two contacts of []

6. When we have the answer to some of these questions we will be in a better position to make any recommendations. Since the two men are allegedly producing intelligence, OSO will probably be interested in participating or at least in sharing the product. Please keep us informed of any developments on this matter.

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